

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: March 16, 2021
Time: 10:00am
Place: Via Zoom Meeting
Egremont

Present via zoom meeting were Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Board member Mary Brazie.

Others participating via zoom: Mary McGurn, Eileen Vining, Joan Goodkind, Fred Gordan, Chuck Ogden.

It was announced that the meeting is video and audio recorded.

Affordable Housing:

Joan Goodkind, Chair of the Housing Committee, presented the Committee's request for \$9,875 to hire S&K Design to do site development work towards proposing a 10 unit affordable housing project on the Town Hall site. An RFP will be issued seeking proposers for the project after the site development is completed. S&K Design did some preliminary work for the town and Construct pro-bono and has a good reputation. The amount is under the required bid limit. Fred Gordan, a member of the Housing Committee, noted he was present to support Joan's request. He said this would give the town a unique opportunity to clear a path of affordable home ownership after 32 years of trying. Fred noted 4 steps needing to take to reach that goal: 1. Funding the site plan which will also determine if the Town wants affordable housing; 2. Selling the land to make it easier for developers to obtain private funding; 3. Obtaining zoning approval; 4. Finding a developer. The Committee feels there will no further funds needed from the town. Town Meeting will need to approve a 10 unit project and the current vote to grant an interest in the property to Construct to build 4 units will need to be rescinded. Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire has asked for a two week extension on submitting a plan for the site. The Housing Committee's request will be placed on the warrant at this time, but may be removed depending on what the CDC proposes.

Compensation/Wages:

The compensation plan proposed by the Compensation Committee and approved by the Finance Committee has exempt employees receiving increases based on a 5% merit pool and most non-exempt employees receiving flat 2% increases across the board. Selectboard member Brazie expressed concern over a large increase being given to the Water Operator after two years on the job which would increase his wage above what the former Water Operator was making after 15 years on the job. She also pointed out the increased for the different roles of the Office Clerk would return the rates to different levels which had been corrected last year. Vice-Chairman Vermeulen expressed concern over the non-exempt employees getting 2% across the board with no consideration of job performance. She thought this removed an incentive and she found it disappointing. The Compensation Committee will discuss the concerns.

The Board approved the following budget requests:

Cemetery Expenses	\$20,000
Cemetery Projects	\$3,000
Public Health Agent	\$13,200
Public Health Services	\$2,833

So. Berk. Emergency Plan C	\$500
Elizabeth Freeman Ctr	\$500
So. Berk. Reg School Dist	\$1,757,965 (the highest increase of all the towns - is attributed in part to 8 additional new students) Was approved pending certification by the district

So. Berk. Reg. School Op	\$1,688,104
SBRSD capital	\$34,775
SBRSD bond	\$35,086
Garden Club	\$275
Transfer Station	\$118,595

The Board discussed issues of odor and aesthetics of the compost area. Enforcement and relocation may be considered.

Highway Collective Bargaining	\$170,883.85
ZBA expenses	\$100
Chamber of Commerce membership	\$260
Friends of Prospect Lake	\$5,000
Broadband Backup Operations	\$3,000

The Board was given a copy of the specifications for the proposed \$315,000 fire truck.

Insurance Property & Casualty	\$126,923
Insurance Health & Dental	\$307,749

Six petitions for marijuana related issues have been received requiring the placement of them on both the Annual Town Meeting Warrant and the Annual Town Election Ballot to ban certain retail marijuana businesses and to limit the number of retail shops. These are believed to be general bylaws and are binding. These petitions are submitted under the Marijuana statutes, MGL C 94G, Section 3, not the general statutes governing placement of items on warrants and ballots. Chairman McGurn went on records as having no desire to place them on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant and expressed his feeling that this circumvents a months long process and work by the town boards on a bylaw which was nearing completion.

Meeting adjourned at 11:03pm.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.21/mar16

The recording of the minutes is on record at the Town Hall for 90 days. Anyone who wishes to may obtain a copy or listen to the recording at Town Hall. Attachments are on file at Town Hall.